GS-025

POSITION CLASSIFICATION STANDARD FOR

Park Ranger Series GS-025

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PARK RANGER SERIES

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PARK RANGER SERIES

This series includes positions the duties of which are to supervise, manage, and/or perform work in the conservation and use of Federal park resources. This involves functions such as park conservation; natural, historical, and cultural resource management; and the development and operation of interpretive and recreational programs for the benefit of the visiting public. Duties characteristically include assignments such as: forest and structural fire control; protection of property from natural or visitor related depredation; dissemination to visitors of general, historical, or scientific information; folk-art and craft demonstrations; control of traffic and visitor use of facilities; enforcement of laws and regulations; investigation of violations, complaints, trespass/encroachment, and accidents; search and rescue missions; and management activities related to resources such as wildlife, lakeshores, seashores, forests, historic buildings, battlefields, archeological properties, and recreation areas.

This standard is a revision of and supersedes the classification standard for the Park Management Series, GS-025, published in June 1969, and the series and series definition for the Park Technician Series, GS-026, which is abolished.

EXCLUSIONS

Excluded from this series are positions that involve primarily:

1. Research or other scientific work which requires a thorough knowledge of and professional competence in a field of the biological or physical sciences. (See definitions and/or standards for the Botany Series, GS-430, Soil Conservation Series, GS-457, Forestry Series, GS-460, Wildlife Biology Series, GS-486, Geology Series, GS-1350, and other professional occupations.)
2. Research or other work in the field of history which requires a professional knowledge of established methods and techniques of historical research in evaluating, analyzing, or presenting facts. (See definition and standard for the History Series, GS-170.)

3. Research or other professional work requiring a thorough knowledge of and professional competence in museum curatorship, archeology, geography, or other specific social science fields. (See series definitions or standards for the Museum Curator Series, GS-1015, Archeology Series, GS-193, Geography Series, GS-150, or other appropriate series in the Social Science, Psychology, and Welfare Group, GS-100.)

4. Engineering or architectural work in park areas which requires professional engineering or architectural knowledges. (See definitions and standards for the Landscape Architecture Series, GS-807, Architecture Series, GS-808, Civil Engineering Series, GS-810, and other pertinent series in the Engineering and Architecture Group, GS-808.)

5. Work in planning, advising on, and coordinating the use of land, water, and related resources to provide opportunities for the creative use of leisure time outdoors with regard to protecting and enhancing the quality of outdoor environment for people. (See definition and standard for the Outdoor Recreation Series, GS-023. Typically, the work covered by the GS-023 series is concerned with broad area, regional, state, or national plans and programs; positions in the GS-023 series typically are not concerned with day-to-day work in parks or similar areas, or with the direction of park operations, or with the provision of immediate staff assistance to those who are dealing with operational problems.)

6. Work in planning and conducting case investigations of persons or organizations that require application of full investigative knowledges, skills, techniques, and methods, and several days or extended periods of information collection, analysis, and evaluation for completion. (See definitions and standards for the General Investigating Series, GS-1810, or the Criminal Investigating Series, GS-1811, as appropriate.)

7. Law enforcement work in protecting life and property by maintaining law and order, preventing crime, detecting or investigating violations of law, preserving peace, and enforcing laws. (See definition and standard for the Police Series, GS-083.)

8. One kind of park work, such as guide service, guard service, or fire control, which does not require a knowledge and understanding of a range of operating techniques and practices involved in park operations. (See the appropriate series for the specialized kind of work involved, such as the Guide Series, GS-090, or the Guard Series, GS-085.)

9. Nonprofessional technical work in engineering. (See the appropriate technician series in the Engineering and Architecture Group, GS-800.)

10. Nonprofessional technical work in, or closely related to, the biological sciences where knowledges and skills directly applicable to general park operations are not paramount. (See the appropriate technician series in the Biological Sciences Group, GS-400.)

AUTHORIZED TITLES

Park Manager is the authorized title for positions of the park general manager who directs personnel, controls and guides the use of funds, materials, and facilities needed to carry out a complex of park programs, and performs important public relations activities for a park or park area.

The Park Manager directs and controls all substantive program activities, e.g., resource management, interpretation, and visitor services, and, in addition, other administrative or technical functions such as maintenance, personnel, and financial management.

Park Ranger is the basic title authorized for all other positions in this series regardless of functions performed. Positions which meet or exceed the criteria in the Supervisory Grade Evaluation Guide for evaluation as a supervisor are titled Supervisory Park Ranger. Park Rangers may perform work in one functional area, i.e., interpretive services, visitor protection/services, or resource management (as described in the occupational information portion of this standard), or, due to operating requirements, the duties may involve various combinations and mixes of functions.

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The work of Park Rangers varies considerably from park to park depending on factors such as the functions performed, the subject matter knowledge required by the work, and the nature of the park or resource(s) involved.

The term *park* is used in this standard to include national monuments; seashores; parkways; historical, military, natural, and urban parks; lakes; and other related areas administered by the Departments of the Army and the Interior.

The term *resource* as used in the standard includes natural, historical, cultural, archeological, or other similar types of resources.

Park programs or functions range from preserving wilderness to operating urban parks; from protecting natural forests and historical buildings to safeguarding people on crowded recreational beaches or lakes; from patrolling back-country areas to delivering interpretive talks in parks, community centers, schools, and similar establishments; from fighting forest fires to controlling large crowds; from overcoming encroachments on public lands to encouraging people to use properly and enjoy park facilities.

To accomplish these functions, Park Rangers perform duties which vary from one park or resource to another because of operating requirements, differing types of parks or resources, the seasonality of operations (e.g., during the "slow" season higher grade-level rangers may, of necessity, perform some tasks usually associated with lower grade-level ranger work), the availability of staff with specialized knowledges, and other related or similar considerations. Generally, the work falls into three broad functional areas:

- *Interpretation*: this involves interpretation of the natural, historical, archeological, or other features of the particular resource and area to enrich the visitors' experience through activities such as talks, guided or self-guided walks, campfire presentations, demonstrations, and environmental education programs both in the park and in community centers, schools, or other related "nonpark" locations.

- o *Visitor Protection and Services*: this involves activities such as operation of campgrounds, marinas, picnic areas, and other recreation facilities; search and rescue or other emergency services; boat, road, or other patrol activities for enforcement and inspection purposes; traffic control; and fee collection.
- o *Resource Management*: this involves the protection, management, and conservation of the natural, historical, and other characteristics of the area through activities such as forest, wildland, and structural fire prevention and suppression; boundary encroachment and land-use activities; fish and wildlife management; preservation of natural, cultural, and/or historical structures and objects; and flood control activities.

Park Ranger duties typically involve a wide range and variety of personal contacts and require specific subject matter knowledges which may differ from position to position. Park Rangers at the GS-2 or GS-3 level typically acquire the necessary basic knowledges, skills, and abilities to carry out the duties of their positions through on-the-job training and experience. (They often perform work in temporary/seasonal positions.) Entry at higher grade levels may be gained through specifically related education, specialized experience (which may include an intensive training/rotational program), or a combination of both approaches.

GRADING OF POSITIONS

The standard does not provide grade-level criteria for Supervisory Park Ranger positions; such positions may be evaluated by the criteria in this standard in combination with the guideline material in the "Supervisory Grade-Evaluation Guide" and the application of sound position classification judgment. Park Manager positions may be evaluated by other position classification standards covering comparable management and administrative work, such as the Forestry Series, GS-460, particularly part II for Forestry (Administration).

Park Ranger positions that have substantial interpretive responsibilities may be evaluated by the "Guide for the Evaluation of Professional Positions Engaged in Interpretive Work," in conjunction with relevant material in this standard.

This series is a one-grade interval series through GS-5 and a two-grade interval series above that grade. The absence of grade level criteria for grades GS-6, GS-8, and GS-10 does not preclude classification of positions at these levels when appropriate.

The lack of illustrative material relating to a particular kind or aspect of Park Ranger work at any given grade level does not mean that the specific work cannot be found at that level. Similarly, the inclusion of a particular kind or aspect of work at a particular grade level and/or its lack of inclusion at a higher/lower grade level does not mean that such work is confined exclusively to that level where it is described. All aspects of a particular grade level, including but not limited to illustrative material, should be reviewed and used when applying this standard.

CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA

1. *Nature of assignment*

This factor measures the complexity/difficulty and scope of the assignment and the knowledge and skills required to carry out the assignment. At lower grade levels, the ranger may assist other rangers and may be assigned work primarily for developmental purposes. At GS-9 and above, assignments typically include some administrative and planning work.

2. *Level of responsibility*

This factor takes into account the judgment exercised, the supervision and guidance received, and the review of the work — either during the course of the work or upon completion.

At the lower grade levels, the ranger generally uses standard methods, techniques, and practices and receives detailed supervision; numerous routine public contacts are typical. At higher levels, the assignments require the ability to plan and lead or execute park program activities. At these higher grade levels, public contacts often involve situations whereby the use of resources generates high public interest regarding controversial management issues.

GS-025-03 **PARK RANGER GS-3** GS-025-03

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-3, are assigned varied, frequently recurring tasks to perform in well-defined situations.

The assigned tasks usually require: (a) a working knowledge of detailed procedures which are either established and repetitive or specified by the supervisor when the tasks are originally assigned (the ranger generally is provided classroom or on-the-job training when initially employed); (b) readily acquired skill or subject-matter knowledges based on experience, education, or training; and (c) communication skills which enable the ranger to meet and deal effectively with persons of different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds in varied work situations.

Park Rangers at this level may be in seasonal positions. Work may include assignments that are designed to develop knowledge of an organization's functions and operating policies/procedures, skill in the effective use and protection of resources, and knowledge of specific programs and operations.

Examples of assignments at this level are:

- o At a visitor center information desk, answers visitors' questions which are usually routine and repetitive and relate largely to factual situations, e.g., geographical location of campgrounds, picnic areas, boating areas, and other recreational areas. Obtains and posts various information to records, such as number of visitors, survey information on length of visitor stay, size of visiting parties, and patterns of visitor use. Maintains supply of information materials and other stock items; sells books and other items.
- o Serves as a lookout to detect and report fires, status of fires, and suspicious smoke. Receives and relays messages by telephone, radio, computer, etc., on weather forecasts and fire hazard conditions. Maintains records of fire weather and firefighting equipment. Under close supervision, participates as a member of a fire crew in the suppression of fires.

- o At an entrance station, answers visitors' questions and explains regulations covering common park use situations, such as campground reservations and rules; collects fees, sells permits, and safeguards and balances collected funds; maintains records on accountable permits and stock items; and controls vehicular traffic.
- o Presents limited interpretive talks and conducts tours of limited complexity that do not require extensive background knowledge.

Level of Responsibility

Work assignments which involve new or nonrepetitive tasks are covered by complete, explicit instructions given at the beginning of each task. Instructions cover areas such as work methods and procedures, equipment available, and results desired. The supervisor is usually available to resolve technical problems encountered by the ranger; however, some assignments at this level may be performed in remote areas which do not permit close supervision. Routine, recurring tasks are spot checked or observed infrequently; the less routine tasks are observed and checked in progress; the technical adequacy of completed work and adherence to instructions are closely reviewed upon completion and discussed in detail with the ranger.

GS-025-04 PARK RANGER GS-4 GS-025-04

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-4, are required to use some specialized skill and judgment in applying knowledge, gained through training or experience, of the methods and techniques used in functional areas such as interpretation. GS-4 rangers must also have some subject matter knowledges such as natural or cultural history, fish or wildlife habitat characteristics, techniques of resource protection and use, recreational use of Federal lands, enforcement of Federal regulations, or fire prevention techniques and fire suppression methods. They apply some or all of these knowledges in well-defined work situations; in addition, they communicate effectively with visitors and obtain their cooperation, identify and report problems or apparent violations of regulations concerning the use of protected or public land areas, and carry out overall agency policies and procedures within the park.

Typically, Park Rangers at this level perform a variety of assignments such as the following:

- o Confirms or assists in establishing Government property lines through the use of various instruments and records including transit and level, real estate maps, aerial photographs, and deeds. Computes and records data for use of higher graded rangers.
- o Collects and records information on items such as water quality and sediment samples, vegetation, exotic plant infestation, wildlife and fish populations, and erosion control and site rehabilitation problems. Drafts reports, documents, maps, and overlays for higher level review. Reads weather instruments and records data.
- o Conducts a radio dispatch operation; provides communications service for operational activities in areas such as emergency assistance, law enforcement, and firefighting support. Receives all routine and emergency telephone and radio calls placed to park headquarters; maintains communications records including radio logs. Codes, logs, files, and routes all violation notices, courtesy tags, and traffic and boating accident reports.
- o Enforces laws and regulations regarding park use, patrols campgrounds, directs vehicular and pedestrian traffic, maintains crowd control, and issues warnings and traffic and parking tickets. Responds to emergency calls and investigates accidents, complaints, disturbances, and other problems. Administers first aid, summons assistance, takes photographs, makes diagrams, and interviews interested persons. During patrols, explains regulations to park visitors and provides information and advice on park activities and cultural, historical, and/or natural resources history and location.
- o Operates a "back-country" office (an office in an area generally removed from paved roads and populous areas), answers visitors' questions, explains regulations, collects site reservation fees, issues back-country reservations and permits, and maintains appropriate records. Resolves visitor problems such as those that occur when sites are denied or when the visitor is unhappy with the permit system or with the environmental characteristics of the site.

- o Conducts scheduled and special patrols of land and water areas. Checks usage and condition of public use areas, commercial docks, group camps, and other recreation areas, including safety, fire, sanitation, and maintenance. Investigates and reports to supervisor any trespasses or other violations; describes extent of problem and reports names of witnesses and/or trespassers when possible.

- o Develops and conducts interpretive talks and guided tour programs. The facts presented are usually limited in variety, or subject to little change from time to time. At an historical site, for example, defines the national significance of the site and its historical background. Answers questions about the site which usually recur repeatedly and require knowledge of a limited variety of facts. events, circumstances, personalities, and natural characteristics identified with the site. Operates and performs minor maintenance on audiovisual equipment.

Level of Responsibility

The ranger works under supervision of a higher level employee for usual day-to-day duties. Assignments which involve conditions, concepts, and standard methods familiar to the ranger are made in general terms without explicit instructions on the techniques to be used or the sequencing of operations to be followed. For special assignments or unfamiliar or unusual assignments which may involve nonroutine technical or personal contact problems, the supervisor gives explicit instructions, or the ranger is given on-the-job training prior to assuming responsibility for carrying out the assignments.

The ranger consults with the supervisor or higher graded ranger on unexpected technical or personal contact problems when this is possible. In some situations, particularly in enforcement activities, action may have to be taken without such discussion.

The work may be spot checked in progress. Completed assignments are reviewed for adherence to special or standing instructions and the use of proper techniques. Nonroutine or new assignments are reviewed in detail, and guidance is given for those modifications in the approach to particular work situations that would be appropriate in future assignments.

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-5, receive assignments that require a general knowledge of program areas such as enforcement or natural and historical information interpretation and development. Rangers at this grade level work within well-established programs but have some responsibility for initiating, developing, or modifying work methods. GS-5 rangers follow established procedures and precedents, and they select or adapt procedures to meet different conditions. Work at this level may include basic developmental assignments. GS-5 rangers: (a) administer operations, such as day-to-day operation of a recreation site, which involve onsite decisions and judgments; (b) make surveys to locate or collect various types of information, such as soil erosion, deer transects, and water or air quality, which require the application of judgment and knowledge of particular program areas; (c) carry out resource management or protection work, such as suppression of fires, evaluation of resource conditions, or enforcement of use requirements, which requires skills and judgment to obtain desired results; and (d) make group and individual contacts to provide information or answer questions about their assigned area of work such as recreational activities or historical, cultural, or natural site information.

The following examples are illustrative:

- o Develops interpretive programs; conducts independent research of topics using sources such as records, books, files, and, where appropriate, interviews with people who have personal knowledge of a particular site or event; selects and organizes material to fit the purposes of a program and the type of group for which it is intended such as preschoolers, special senior citizens groups, and U.S. or foreign dignitaries. Presents a variety of formal and interpretive programs including orientation talks, environmental education programs, conducted walks, demonstrations, and campfire programs. Initiates or assists with creation or revision of interpretive materials, such as guidebooks, handouts, and exhibits. Operates a variety of audiovisual and other equipment used in connection with interpretive material including movie and slide projectors, cassette and reel-to-reel recorders, and video equipment.

- o Plans day-to-day operation of a recreation area providing such facilities as camping, water sports, or picnic areas; coordinates routine activities with maintenance personnel. Advises visitors concerning safety, fire prevention, and proper and authorized uses of recreational facilities; inspects facilities and checks for compliance with rules and regulations pertaining to parking, campfires, noise-level, sanitation, and safety; brings problems or violations to the attention of visitors and, if appropriate, issues notices of violations. Reviews visitor use patterns and their effect on the resource; suggests changes in operation or facilities. Oversees fee collection activities, maintains records on and accounts for funds, and submits deposits.

- o Performs road, traffic, boundary and/or hunting patrol; investigates motor vehicle accidents and issues citations, such as traffic and parking tickets or warnings, to violators; assists in preliminary investigation of felonies, such as drug smuggling or large scale poaching.

  Responds to emergency calls and takes action necessary to preserve the peace, resolve problems, protect visitors and resources, apprehend violators, give emergency first aid and other appropriate assistance, and obtain and protect evidence. Provides visitors with information concerning points of interest, travel routes, historical and natural features, and park activities. Performs building and park security patrol and monitors security and fire alarm systems. Conducts or participates in various search and rescue operations which may involve such activities as underwater diving or mountain climbing.

- o Patrols lake area to ensure compliance with regulatory and administrative requirements. Investigates and reports all trespass or damage to Government property, showing amount of damage or type of trespass, persons involved, and recommendations for corrective action. When action is not taken to correct problems, issues warnings or citations for the violations. Inspects private mooring facilities to ensure issuance of and compliance with terms of permit. Provides applicants with information on issuance and terms of permits; takes initial application for permit; informs permit holders of action required

to correct minor violations of permits and reports major violations to supervisor.

- o Performs skilled tasks in the fire management program; conducts field data collection of wildland fire behavior and weather; establishes photo monitoring stations on burn units; performs preburn and post-burn vegetation and fuel inventories; assists in the scheduling and preparation of unit burn plans. Services and maintains tools and equipment; conducts periodic inventories of fire caches and supplies; conducts field surveys and updates presuppression information, such as potential fire line locations, campsites, sources of water, and possible helicopter sites. Periodically inspects the park's fire prevention systems, determines whether systems are meeting the required standards of operation, and advises supervisor of inadequacies or potential problem areas.

Level of Responsibility

The GS-5 ranger works on own initiative in selecting and applying methods, techniques, and procedures. The work assignments are made in terms of ultimate objectives of assignments, with general instructions for special assignments (e.g., those involving special holiday work situations or high ranking Government officials). The ranger typically resolves technical or personal contact problems which are similar to those encountered in the course of previous assignments.

The supervisor provides assistance in resolving problems that have unusual or unfamiliar conditions, methods, or concepts.

The work is reviewed for adequacy of presentation or handling of visitor problems, logic in the application/selection of appropriate techniques, and conformity with policy. Review of completed work is more intense for assignments involving work that the ranger had not previously performed.

GS-025-07 PARK RANGER GS-07 GS-025-07

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-7, receive assignments of substantial variety for which established precedents are not fully applicable. GS-7 rangers

select appropriate guidelines and references to solve operational problems or to facilitate details of the work planning process. Some GS-7 rangers develop revisions to standard work methods and procedures and take actions or make recommendations based on their preliminary interpretation of data.

GS-7 rangers typically apply a thorough, specific knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods related to the functional area(s) of assignments, and a good general knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods as they relate to the total activities in the park.

Work at this level may also involve developmental assignments. Such assignments are typically in connection with an intensive training/rotational program.

The following assignments are illustrative:

- o Suggests new topics, revisions, and other changes or improvements in the overall interpretive program; participates in development of program plans which include program content, emphasis, and methods. Develops interpretive materials such as pamphlets, exhibits, and signs. Recommends location and layout of new exhibits. Is responsible for onsite interpretive service, including development of daily work schedules which include tours of duty and location of assignments for the supervisor's approval. Audits and coaches other rangers in the interpretive program.

- o Acts as liaison with community organizations and interest groups in order to: (a) provide orientation to park programs and services; (b) stimulate interest in such programs and services; and (c) discover ways to facilitate visitation to and use of the park's recreational and educational facilities. Coordinates group visits with operational personnel and communicates schedules, logistical support requirements, and other pertinent data. Identifies visitor needs for specific programs and services through surveys, questionnaires, and group discussions. Recruits and trains candidates for volunteer programs, develops work projects, and coordinates activities with other park personnel. Observes, monitors, and evaluates onsite programs to determine if visitor needs are met; determines and

recommends activities that community organizations could undertake to increase program effectiveness.

- o Monitors and inspects use of various resources, such as lands and shoreline, including leased land, concessions, docks, roads, and contract work performed. Plans day-to-day activities and recommends changes in the type or level of use and location of facilities. Provides information to visitors; makes presentations to interested groups. Advises adjacent landowners, users, and lessees on problems such as encroachment, violations of lease agreements, and noncompliance with permits or licenses; issues warnings or citations. Recommends measures to improve administration or use of facilities.

Level of Responsibility

The Park Ranger, GS-7, performs operational assignments, requiring initiative and resourcefulness to carry out day-to-day planning and execution, or to oversee the execution of operational assignments. Assignments typically involve locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines, and then determining which of several alternatives to use. Park Rangers, GS-7, adapt procedures to fit work situations and develop and recommend revisions to standard work methods. They also may prepare portions of seasonal or weekly work plans, including estimates of materials, supplies, and employees needed for routine maintenance and supply activities.

At this level, the supervisor makes the initial assignment by indicating the purpose and general direction of the program or project and any deadlines or similar constraints. Guidance is provided for new developments, changes in program or policies, and deviations in procedures that are required by the supervisor or higher level management. Completed work is reviewed for technical soundness, appropriateness, and accomplishment of objectives.

GS-025-09 PARK RANGER GS-09 GS-025-09

Nature of the assignment

Park Rangers, GS-9, apply resourcefulness, judgment, and ingenuity in the accomplishment of tasks such as the formulation and execution of park resource and interpretive plans and programs; the promotion

of environmental, conservation, and public use programs; the planning and execution of resource management analyses concerning the level and types of uses of resources, deterioration in resources, and changes needed in operating programs or type of use; the planning and execution of management analyses concerning the effectiveness and visitor appeal of the interpretive programs and literature; and the development of necessary program improvements, including the selection of new media or techniques.

GS-9 rangers may be responsible for overseeing the development and execution of programs, including coordination of the work of other rangers, or may serve as staff specialists providing advice and guidance agencywide.

The following assignments are illustrative:

- o Drafts plans for operations, including resource management and seasonal staffing priorities. Compiles evaluation reports and makes recommendations on specific management problems, including scenic easement, special use permits, and visitor use and safety. Develops training programs and prepares new or revised guidelines and operating procedures that deal with matters such as regulatory or law enforcement activities, wildland and structural fire control, and search and rescue problems. Makes periodic inspections of campgrounds, picnic areas, Government buildings, trails, roads, lakeshores, and parking areas, to determine quality of operations and services, and uses this information to develop improvements in diverse areas such as added employee training, requests for new facilities, and changes in concessionaire operation.
- o Coordinates development and implementation of a variety of cultural history projects which include subject areas such as ethnic history, local folklore, historical sites and buildings, possible demonstration projects, and interpretive efforts regarding park history. Prepares portions of the interpretive planning and budgeting program documents. Identifies local cultural or historical sites and structures; recommends preservation, restoration, and/or maintenance needs. Develops portions of a cultural history resource management plan. Develops training materials and programs and provides direction and training to

rangers in the implementation and utilization of interpretive materials. Monitors walks, talks, and cultural history demonstrations conducted by lower graded rangers, critiques these activities, and recommends individual or program improvements.

- o Coordinates the development and implementation of plans, such as the burro, back-country, river, wildlife, fish, and vegetation management plans. Provides advice and guidance to ranger staff and management on the environmental impact of potential or proposed activities. Coordinates preparation of base maps and overlays for ecosystems of the area and assembles data files for use of rangers. Establishes a routine to monitor ecological processes, to identify incipient problems, and to develop and recommend corrective projects or programs. Reviews and analyzes new construction or other development proposals, including concession activities, to assure adequate preservation and appropriate use of all park resources. Coordinates programs for the protection of rare and endangered plant and animal species with staff within the agency and in other Federal, State, and local agencies and institutions.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor outlines major objectives, critical deadlines, and the overall nature of expected results. The Park Ranger, GS-9, independently plans the detailed steps necessary to complete assignments, including recommending changes in operating plans when necessary. When unexpected and unusual conditions or work situations are encountered which might engender significant controversy, the GS-9 ranger discusses proposed actions with the supervisor before implementation.

The Park Ranger, GS-9, works with guides that are generally applicable but not specific to onsite conditions or problems. The GS-9 ranger must select from alternative methods or approaches which appear to be appropriate to the existing situation, and make or recommend compromises required to meet objectives.

Completed work, whether routine or nonroutine, is reviewed for overall adequacy, consistency, and correlation with related activities, programs, and objectives.

GS-025-11 **PARK RANGER GS-11** GS-025-11

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-11, receive assignments which typically consist of diverse complex technical and/or administrative problems. They independently, on a regular and recurring basis, identify the nature of the problem and the kinds of information, criteria, and techniques needed to arrive at a solution. Typical assignments at the GS-11 level require consideration of and selection from several alternative approaches or solutions to problems and sometimes require substantial adaptation of standardized guides and criteria. Park Rangers, GS-11, are required to have substantial knowledge and understanding of the impact that the management of historical, cultural, and/or natural resources may have on communities and other interested groups, e.g., conservation and historical associations.

The work situation is characteristically one where development and planning are only partially completed, or if completed, require substantial modification to accommodate different characteristics than previously anticipated, such as a significant increase in visitor loads; a loss of visitor facilities or services due to vandalism, fire, or other similar circumstances; an increase in size of the land area to be managed; or a significant increase in organized and critical public interest in resource management plans.

The following assignments are illustrative:

- o Plans, develops, coordinates, and directs programs related to visitor services and resource management, such as search and rescue, recreation, hunting, trespass and traffic control, soil erosion control, fire management and presuppression, and protection of historic or prehistoric sites. Determines type, amount, and location of work to be accomplished for each activity; calculates cost of each activity based on staffing, equipment, supplies, and material requirements; and drafts and submits for approval the annual budget and operating program. Revises program activities to conform to approved and available funds, and implements and oversees annual operating program. Assesses condition and type of use of various recreational areas, including a major campground and a lengthy trail

system. Develops recommendations for revisions to these areas, including modification in type of use and additions or deletions to the trail system. Leads studies concerning visitor service operations to assess the impact of visitor use on developed and undeveloped areas; recommends changes in use due to revision in estimated carrying capacity and/or actual or potential damage to resources. Controls visitor impact on back-country and other key areas through the use of permits, reservations, or other suitable procedures. Develops plans for the safety of visitors and for appropriate search and rescue operations. Formulates standard operating procedures for all assigned functions and develops basic guidelines and procedures to follow in emergencies or unusual situations.

- o As a staff specialist, plans, organizes, or oversees studies and surveys on administrative, visitor, interpretive, and resource management problems. Recommends methods, procedures, and equipment needed to conduct studies, and, where appropriate, identifies persons or institutions qualified to assist in or carry out the projects. Drafts project plans for resource management activities, such as planning the steps necessary to prevent destruction of outstanding and irreplaceable historic structures and resources due to natural phenomena, problems caused by visitors, or other activities that would have an impact on the area's resources. Reviews proposals which may have an impact on park resources and prepares or coordinates the preparation of environmental assessments or environmental impact statements.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor specifies the objectives and the general scope of the assignment. Park Rangers, GS-11, are generally free to develop work plans, to devise techniques covering both routine and nonroutine operations and activities, and to select, modify, and use the techniques for carrying out assignments. Supervisory personnel may provide advice and assistance in the implementation of new or revised policies and procedures or in making a choice between several equally complex and rational approaches to work planning and execution.

The GS-11 ranger is expected to recognize critical trends in park use and operations, to evaluate their significance, and to plan and

implement changes in park programs and operations. Completed work is usually reviewed on a spot-check basis for sound approach and accomplishment of program objectives. Management plans are usually reviewed in draft prior to adoption.

At the GS-11 level, rangers have considerable contacts with community officials, various interest groups, and other groups and individuals regarding matters such as the negotiation of agreements, investigation and resolution of complaints, and reconciliation of conflicting viewpoints.

GS-025-12 **PARK RANGER GS-12** GS-025-12

Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-12, are recognized as competent in the application of advanced techniques of resource management and/or indepth subject-matter knowledges, and they apply their comprehensive experience and understanding in identifying, defining, and resolving problems connected with novel, undeveloped, or controversial aspects of resource management, interpretation, and use. Assignments typically are characterized by the requirement to extend or adapt guidelines and technical precedents, and the need to solve problems, in many instances, without benefit of adequate, consistent, or noncontroversial data or data sources.

GS-12 rangers direct complex programs in resource management, interpretation, and/or visitor services and perform advisory, coordination, and review services for park activities. The following situations are typical of those dealt with at this grade level: (a) an intense public interest in the development of additional recreational resource facilities which exists when the current level of use is already threatening one or more of the park's resources; (b) a strained relationship with the local community which develops because of efforts to acquire additional land to protect the existing resource; (c) the need to restrict entry to an area of significant public interest due to factors such as the fragile nature of the resources involved, severely limited funds, overcrowding, vandalism, motor vehicle noise and pollution, land development encroachment, or other related problems; or (d) the need to determine the extent to which it is appropriate to develop a particular resource. Because of situations like these, and because of

the breadth or depth of the assigned area, assignments at the GS-12 level present substantial planning problems and require liaison with other personnel and organizations — both within the agency and outside of it. These assignments have complex technical, administrative, and/or public relations implications and typically require analyses and decisions in areas where precedents differ, there are no pertinent or apparent precedents, or significant management decisions change existing guidelines or appear to require a technical decision at variance with existing guides.

The following assignments are illustrative:

- o Is responsible for all resource management and visitor protection and service activities within a park. Serves as technical advisor on the more complex problems that arise in law enforcement, recreation programs, rescue and emergency services, and concessionaire relations. Formulates budgetary and administrative plans and oversees their implementation and review; this includes program planning and budgeting for law enforcement, training, visitor protection, campground management, fee collection, fire management, and safety. Develops agreements with law enforcement authorities, cooperating agencies, and neighbors. Evaluates new techniques, methods, and operational approaches for handling law enforcement, recreation programs, and other visitor service functions; evaluates, for example, whether revised campground layouts and plans are operationally feasible, whether new equipment is economical and practical, or whether new forms of recreational activity or new techniques for managing visitors can be put into effect.

- o Serves as an advisor and troubleshooter in an office having responsibility for a number of programs. Provides advisory assistance in the protection, conservation, and management of vegetation, soil, water, and wildlife resources. In cooperation with specialists, investigates/surveys and identifies insect infestation or diseased infection in vegetative cover. Recommends insect and disease control projects and assists in the implementation of these projects. Reviews projects for compliance with technical specifications and effectiveness of project strategy. Conducts field investigations and surveys of soil

conditions to identify problem areas. In consultation with other specialists, recommends stabilization or conservation methods to restore areas. Coordinates the development of interagency cooperative agreements in the various areas of natural resource management. Develops, analyzes, evaluates, and recommends policies, programs, and objectives for resource management for all parks covered by the staff office.

- o Serves as a staff specialist for interpretive programs and policies in an office covering a number of parks. Evaluates effectiveness of interpretive programs carried out in the parks. Assists park staff in the development of diverse interpretive programs and advises them on ways to strengthen or improve quality through use of various media such as dance, theater, music, arts/crafts, and living history presentations. Provides advice and guidance in the planning, development, and operation of visitor centers, exhibits, and displays. Revises historical manuscripts, records, and interpretive documents and brochures to ensure that information in park programs is accurate and factual and to provide advice and assistance on revisions or the addition of new or different material. Coordinates interpretive training in various locations; reviews field training programs, provides advice on adequacy of their content, and makes recommendations for improvement.

Level of Responsibility

Park Rangers, GS-12, are usually given broad general objectives and relative priorities for completion of projects or assignments, and are guided, additionally, by basic policies of the employing jurisdiction.

They enjoy marked freedom from technical control and are expected independently to select techniques, establish methods and procedures for studying and resolving particular problems, handle conflict situations, and otherwise carry assignments through to completion. Controversial policy questions are resolved by joint review and consultation with the supervisor, who reviews completed work for adequacy in meeting program objectives and agreement with overall policies, but generally not for format or technical considerations. GS-12 rangers initiate new projects or activities, after major changes in policies or programs, jointly with the supervisor or with rangers or specialists at higher organizational levels.

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Rangers at the GS-12 level typically are relied upon as authorities within their organizations concerning their particular program function or activity. Little or no technical guidance is provided to them unless they encounter critical or controversial situations or issues. Their decisions and recommendations are rarely changed by higher authority, and then, usually because of new or modified policy. Public contacts are broad and varied. Park Rangers, GS-12, establish and maintain continuing working relationships with personnel of other Federal and non-Federal agencies to exchange ideas and information on methods, problems, and developments of mutual interest, to coordinate work on adjoining lands, or to plan and coordinate joint projects.

GS-12 rangers serve as spokespersons for their function, park, or office in contacts with community leaders, state officials, and leaders of interest groups in order to obtain objectives of agency policy and concurrently maintain or establish good public relations. They may represent their agency in various interagency cooperative committees, but generally they do not have the authority to commit the agency to a given course of action.

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Nature of Assignment

Park Rangers, GS-13, receive assignments that involve a high degree of judgment, resourcefulness, leadership skills, and expert problem solving abilities. They develop programs of broad scope with widespread impact and a high degree of complexity. The GS-13 Park Ranger is generally recognized as a technical expert or authority in his/her area of assignment.

Rangers at this level typically perform work at organizational levels above the park level. (Where the work is performed at park level, the park has a very complex program where the ranger's assignments are of such magnitude, complexity, importance, and level of public interest that the ranger discharges a key role in planning and administration of the total park program, which may affect nationwide programs.) The work at this level is characterized by problems of a unique nature for which the typical available guides are basic laws, conservation and use principles, and agency and fundamental park management philosophies. GS-13 rangers: (a) assert

technical leadership and provide staff coordination, review, and consultation on basic issues in assigned functions; (b) determine the need for, initiate, and/or recommend policies, program procedures, and standards to be used as guides by park managers, rangers, contractors, concessionaires, lessees, and others in a variety of situations; (c) review operating programs for quality and effectiveness; and (d) develop a variety of original plans, concepts, systems, and programs which involve significant departures from current practices, are highly controversial, and embody numerous complex variables.

The following are illustrative assignments:

- o Serves as functional leader or program chief in an office in charge of a major phase of the agency's park program. Establishes program priorities and directs the preparation of instructions, information, guidelines, and plans for broad interpretive programs covering subjects such as natural resources, history (human and natural), and archeology. Provides advice, guidance, and coordination to the staff of various parks for the planning, development, and operation of interpretive facilities such as visitor centers, museums, and wayside exhibits, and, in consultation with subject-matter experts, for the preservation and curatorial management of collections of ethnologic material, natural history specimens, archeological objects, and historical artifacts. Plans and conducts field trips to keep informed of local conditions and concerns, to evaluate interpretive operations for quality and adherence to agency policies, guidelines, and practices, and to determine the effectiveness of current policies and practices.

- o Serves as an expert advisor and technical leader in the national office in several diverse program areas, including water oriented recreational activities, such as boating, swimming, and waterskiing; campground operation; and use of off-road vehicles, such as snowmobiles. Identifies the need for and drafts policies, guidelines, and procedures for field use. Reviews programs developed by lower level units for compliance with agency policy and guidelines and for quality and effectiveness; recommends appropriate action. Writes/reviews regulations; reviews proposed legislation and prepares comments. Reviews

documents relating to park management objectives, planning, and resource management objectives and modifies them as necessary.

Level of Responsibility

Park Rangers, GS-13, are considered authorities in their particular area of responsibility, and their recommendations are recognized and accepted as the best available technical solutions and are reviewed primarily in relation to broad policy and administrative controls, such as budget requirements and master plans. Their supervisors and higher authorities rely on them in the determination or modification of policies, programs, and actions.

The instructions received from supervisory personnel are very broad, and rangers at the GS-13 level independently solve diverse and difficult problems, including those concerning controversial and/or critical issues. GS-13 rangers represent and speak for the agency in the program area to which assigned and have authority to make joint decisions with cooperating and intra-agency committees.

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